

GROWING GUIDING GATHERING TO GIVE GIRLS A VOICE



A group of young women in Girlguiding Cymru from across Wales were joined by Kirsty Williams AM for a guiding get-together on Friday, 13 March 2015. They gathered at Margam Park in Port Talbot to celebrate two successful years of growing Guiding across the nation.

The special event organised by Girlguiding Cymru comes as the culmination of a National Voluntary Youth Organisations grant from the Welsh Government. This has enabled more young women from across Wales to get into Guiding, speak out about issues that affect them and access important Peer Education sessions in a girl-only space.

Thanks to the grant, Girlguiding's Peer Education scheme has grown across Wales since 2013, allowing for 77 new Peer Educators to be trained to deliver sessions about body image, young people's health and healthy relationships for teenagers. They have reached more than 900 girls and young women aged 7-25.

Regional Peer Educators Rachel and Rhian said: "Peer education has been a life changing experience that has enabled us to develop existing and new skills in the friendly and fun environment of Girlguiding. It is shocking to see how much young people are pressured to look a certain way but after running a free being me session this changed and they could see that everyone is unique. This was possible with the Welsh Government grant and for that we want to thank them."

Girlguiding Cymru's national youth council, Dyfodol y Ddraig, has also grown to 26 young women. This group gets together regularly to discuss Girlguiding Cymru projects which affect them.

The Welsh Government grant has also enabled girls to speak out and change the things that affect them in their own communities. One group delivered a petition about domestic violence to the

Senedd, and others organised events in support of Age Cymru and charity Follow Your Dreams.

Finally, Girlguiding Cymru was able to consult a large group of girls and young women on a range of issues for its report, "Here Come the Girls". In it girls were asked their opinions on a number of topics from feminism to bilingualism to education and employment. The report found that:

- 95% of Welsh girls in Guiding feel the skills they have acquired through being a member of Girlguiding Cymru will help them in a working environment.
- 89% agree that Guiding has given them opportunities they could not have gained anywhere else.
- 85% feel that Guiding has given them better team working skills.

Click [here](#) to view the full report and watch our [video](#).

Young women were joined at the event by Girlguiding Cymru volunteers, staff, Lord Lieutenant, High Sheriffs, members of the Fire and Rescue Service, South Wales Police, Welsh Rugby Union and representatives from the Minority Ethnic Women's Network and Sport Wales, among others.

Felicity Ladbrooke, Chief Commissioner said "Girlguiding is all about giving girls a voice, and it was fantastic to celebrate that today. Hearing about how this grant has changed girls' lives across Wales has been a fantastic highlight of the event today."

Kirsty Williams AM said "I have been so impressed with today's event, I'm already a huge supporter of Girlguiding Cymru. It has been great to hear how the organisation is helping to deliver better opportunities for welsh girls and young women"

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